

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## China - Peoples Republic of

**Post:** Guangzhou

### California Delegation Connect with Cantonese Business Leaders

**Report Categories:**

Market Development Reports

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**Report Highlights:**

On April 15, 2013, led by Secretary Karen Ross of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, ten California agricultural representatives visited Guangzhou (Canton) and refreshed their business ties with this most vibrant city in South China.

## General Information:

**ATO Guangzhou Briefing:** On April 15, 2013, ATO Guangzhou welcomed the California Agricultural Delegation with an in depth overview of the South China market. ATO Guangzhou Director explained the history and importance of South China's trade and distribution networks to the delegation and answered a number of questions regarding frozen meat trade. Members of the delegation were impressed with South China's dynamism and with the opportunities to California products in the HRI, retail, food ingredients, animal feed and raw materials sectors. Since its establishment in 1985, ATO Guangzhou has been leading Mainland China in the importation and distribution of a number of U.S. agricultural products.



*Visit to Jiangnan Market*

**Visit to Jiangnan Market:** The agricultural portion of Brown's delegation, led by Secretary Karen Ross visited the Jiangnan wholesale market (the largest wholesale market for imported fresh fruit in Mainland China) and had eye-opening discussions with the senior management team of the market with regards to improving the management of the supply chain for U.S. fresh fruit. The delegation received a tour of the 50,000-staffed market where they were presented with a number of familiar brands from California.

The delegation saw number of consignments of California navel oranges for example that were being repackaged en route to be distributed to every possible destination in Mainland China. Secretary Ross made observations about the cold chain management since most of the trucks transporting imported fruit in-and-out of Jiangnan were not using refrigerated cabins. The delegation also held a round table discussion with some of largest fruit importers to understand the Mainland China market. Two members of the delegation discussed the future of California berry exports to China with traders. The delegation also saw some remaining table grapes and plums shipments although the supplies for these two products were small. After the visit, Jiangnan management contacted mentioned to the ATO how much they appreciated the delegation's visit and wished more similar communication could happen on a more frequent basis. From the Jiangnan market perspective, they are optimistic about future collaboration between the State of California and Guangdong Province.



*Taste of California Media Event*

**“Taste of California”:** Weeks leading into the delegation’s visit, ATO Guangzhou coordinated with the Guangzhou China Marriott Hotel chefs’ on dish preparations and assisted in inviting local media partners to taste the culinary delicacies of the Sunshine State. In total, 25 print, radio, online and television media outlet representatives attended the chef demonstration and enjoyed the six course-meal featuring California ingredients. The media attendees were impressed

by the freshness of California fruit and the unique combination of local ingredients and tastes paired with popular California ingredients.

Wines from California were a hot topic of discussion during the Taste of California event. These three wines were donated by members of the American Wine Import Association.

Secretary Ross’ main messages to the media centered on the many contributions California farmers and ranchers provide the State’s economy. She emphasized three points 1) on the importance of balancing organic and conventional agricultural practices; 2) sustainable agricultural growing practices with regards to producing in regions with limited water supplies; and, 3) touched on the almond name change since it was the first time that many in the media had heard the new almond (badanmu 巴旦木) name.

She was asked two questions with regards to ensuring food safety in the States which she answered modestly by admitting that the “success of the U.S. food safety system was a team effort” and that it was a “work-in-progress and not perfect” and that it worked well because of the contributions from partners such as universities and research (both public and private), legal enforcement, consumer advocacy and vigilance, and the dedicated work made by local, state, and national officials. Secretary Ross also mentioned how important promoting U.S. wine culture is to forwarding every aspect of the U.S.-China relationship. She also added that she was willing to lead groups from China to explore California’s bountiful wine regions.

Finally, Secretary Ross and her delegation visited Olé supermarket in the evening. She was pleasantly surprised to see more U.S. agricultural products than any other store she had ever toured in China. California food items and wines were easy to spot and local store managers also accompanied the delegation and answered many of their questions. Modeled after U.S.’s Wholefoods and Trade Joe’s, Olé outlets are usually located inside fancy shopping malls and such is the case in Guangzhou’s Taikoo Plaza. The stores have been successful at introducing a wide assortment of imported food items such as cheeses, chocolates, coffee, wine, biscuits, and fresh fruit albeit at high prices. In 2012, ATO Guangzhou led a national retail promotion with their 17 Olé outlets. We hope this visit leads to frequent collaboration between California and South China.

## **Media Coverage**

**New Express** (cir. – 600,000, in Guangzhou; mainly targeting middle-class people)

**CA food promotion in Guangzhou** (April 19; positive)

<http://news.xkb.com.cn/shipin/2013/0419/260349.html>

Gist: In a package of short stories on food promotions, the California (CA) piece as the first one highlights that a CA delegation of food business and agriculture associations led by Governor Brown and Secretary Ross visited Guangzhou. The agricultural delegation hosted media, tasting CA products, to name a few. The chef crafted fine western food with quality CA ingredients, paired with CA wines.

**Top Business Wire** (in Guangdong)

**CA agricultural delegation promotes fine food in GZ**

<http://www.topbiz360.com/web/html/newscenter/origin/130409.html>

Gist: The CA agricultural delegation visited Guangzhou, and introduced quality products at a tasting event for local media. After pitching CA's agricultural strength and resource and popular produces, the article quotes Secretary Karen Ross' remarks that she is optimistic to push the CA-China agricultural trade to a new height, quality CA foodstuffs are available in local market, and the (Chinese) consumers have the access to CA taste.

ATO Director Sanchez noted that more and more CA produces land in Guangzhou, a port city in South China, and wished the event could help more people better know the good CA products.